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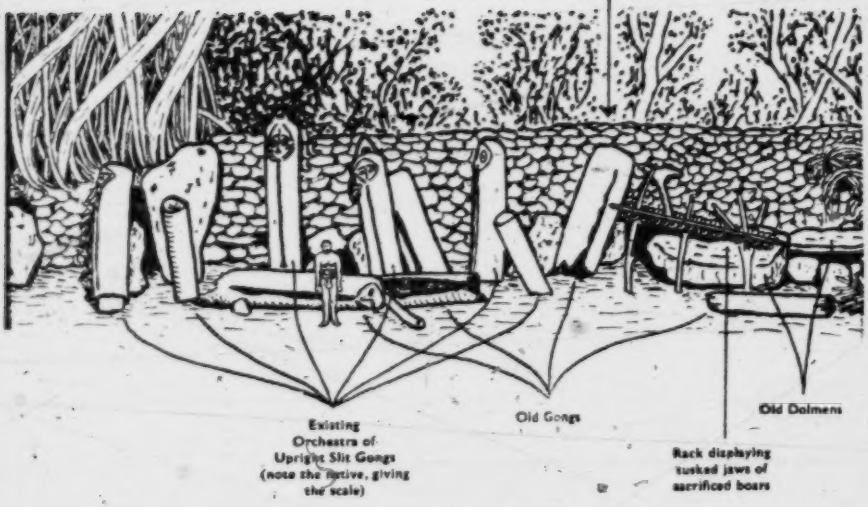

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Plates II, Fig. 2, and XIII, Fig. 1 — Plate XIII, Fig. 2

Stone monuments and upright slit gongs erected on the Upper S
of the village of Pete-bul in connexion with the megalithic rite calle
author's notes and with the aid of Plates II, III, XIII, XVI). Th
by the insertion of a native figure (my informant, Ma-taru) stand
Letters **A** to **F** refer to the account of successive performances of the

50 Feet

[Frontispiece (B)]

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hover near them and are commemorated by them. Closely connected with this is the propitiatory aspect of the rite, which is at the same time a prophylactic against the wrath of all ancestors as constellated in the figure of a devouring Guardian Ghost. In the closely associated megalithic ritual in South Raga described by Tattevin,[1] those demanding special propitiation are the male representatives of the maternal line such as the mother's brother and the mother's mother's brother, whose favoured position under the former system of matrilineal descent has been undermined and to a large extent overthrown by the system of overt patrilineal descent, that, coming from the south, is the dominating feature of the latest cultural wave to have overtaken this part of Melanesia and the distribution of which in the North-Central New Hebrides coincides very closely with that of the Maki. In this sense the Maki also is a kinship rite of the highest significance, and in its component sub-rites also includes the ritual payment of debts to a great number of living relatives, chief among whom are the mother's brother and the wife's father.

Coupled with this is the effort to achieve immortality implicit in the attempt to ward off the evil activities of the Guardian Ghost, who is an earthbound creature guarding the cave through which the ghost of the dead man must pass on his way to the Land of the Dead, and who will devour him if not duly propitiated by the lifelong performance of these rites, supported by sacrifices performed by the dead man's kinsman during the ritual carried out at his death, and by the further presentation of a gift by the ghost of the dead man himself. This effort to escape the annihilating influence of the grave and rise superior to earthly considerations is further expressed in the identification of each individual performing the rite with the mythical hawk who presides over the rites and whose image adorns the shrines built in honour of the ancestral ghosts as well as the place of retreat to which the celebrants retire after their ritual re-birth.

Every step in this ritual is further accompanied by singing and dancing of the most elaborate kind expressing the whole gamut of emotions, accompanied by rhythms played on an orchestra of slit gongs formed from tree trunks hollowed out by means of a longitudinal slit. These gongs, many feet higher than a man, are in Malekula planted upright in the ground, and are carved at the top to represent a face of which the upper end of the slit takes the place of the mouth. These gongs thus represent ancestors, and the sounds issuing from the slit when they are sounded are the ancestral voices urging and encouraging the living to dance themselves into that state of communal ecstasy that banishes personal affects and brings them into communion with collective forces passed on from the long line of those now dead, who have themselves performed these rites, to their representatives now living and dancing, and to the issue of these still to come.

[1] See p. 721.

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PLATE II. 1 and 2

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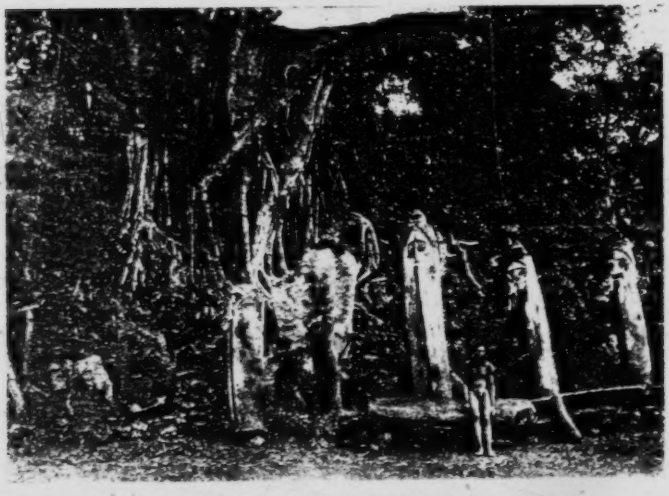

1. Original stone-platform at Pete-hul, on which cannibal feasts were held in a "cave" hollowed out from the aërial roots of the overhanging banyan tree. *(See Frontispiece)*

2. Gong-orchestra at Pete-hul, with Ma-taru leaning against an old prostrate gong used as a seat when playing the mother-gong

[facing p. 35]

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ancestral ghosts around whose cult the ritual which takes place in the dancing-ground centres.

Turning our backs now on the Lower Side, let us, with the aid of the panoramic view seen in the Frontispiece and Plates II and III, survey the high place where the chief sacrifices take place. From end to end the ground is about 300 feet long. Along the whole of the Upper Side, built on the slight elevation which forms one side of the valley, is a continuous platform of coral blocks carefully fitted together, rising to a height of 10 to 12 feet from the ground. This, though in appearance a continuous structure, is in fact a succession of contiguous stone-platforms on which the most important tusked boars are sacrificed.[1] On the extreme left is the enormous banyan tree already mentioned, some of the aerial roots of which have been carved away so as to form a kind of cave within the tree, where, on a part of the stone-platform rather lower than the rest, cannibal feasts were formerly held.

To the right of this in front of the stone-platform is a small dolmen and other upright stones, and to the right of these again stands proudly the orchestra of upright slit gongs, huge trunks of forest trees transported from the mainland, hollowed out through a longitudinal slit so as to leave only a thin shell of the original trunk. Above the slit is carved an image representing the face of the ancestral ghost, whose voice speaks when the gong is sounded by hitting one side of the slit with a soft-wood stick. The nose of the image is pierced, and from it hang the jaws of the tusked pigs sacrificed in its honour on the day of consecration. The tallest of these gongs is about 12 feet high, not counting the base buried in the ground. Since no sacred object is ever removed, but simply allowed to rot where it stood, the remains of old gongs are also seen, two leaning to the right, one lying in front, now used as a seat for casual use. Four different sizes of gongs go to make up an orchestra, and the complicated and indescribably stirring rhythms they beat out are the wonder of all who have the good fortune to hear them.[2]

Beyond the gongs, supported on three stakes, is a rack displaying the jaws of tusked pigs recently sacrificed in one of the innumerable performances that go to make up the protracted Maki rite. To the right of this is another small dolmen, and beyond this again is a cylindrical cane structure set up to protect a special yam and banana tree planted during the mortuary rites for an old man.[3]

To the right of these again are three large dolmens. These, as will be described later,[4] were erected at successive performances of the Maki rite (as in the case of gongs, no sacred stone object is ever removed), and are the stone altars at which other important tusked pigs are sacrificed.

[1] For details of the sacrifices performed here and at the other stones see pp. 413 ff., 430.
[2] For details see pp. 311 ff.
[3] See p. 550.
[4] See p. 414.

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231 threw a stone towards her (the usual way of a lover to make his presence
539 known), and she turned back and saw him, and they went into the bush and lay together.

After this the woman bore a son. And Burial said, "Now I've got a son, I will buy a pig for him." So he bought a sow, which conceived, but instead of delivering at Pweter-ges, she ran away and littered at Tolamp (this must have been at the time when Tolamp was already on the mainland), where she gave birth to five male pigs. And Burial looked everywhere for the sow, but could not find her, till at last he lit upon her tracks (for it was the time of the rains), and followed them to Tolamp, where he found his sow and her five pigs and took them home. Next day he gave ten yams to his women [1] and told them to go to Tolamp and give them to Ter-ter as a return for "getting his wife with child and making his sow give birth to the five pigs." And having taken them they returned home.[2]

CONCH-SHELL TRUMPETS

(a) *Connected with the sacrifice of tusked boars.*

534 Before leaving the subject of pigs, one object especially connected with them deserves more than passing mention. This is the conch-shell trumpet, made by boring a hole in a large Triton shell.[3] When blown through this hole, the trumpet emits a loud, deep sound which carries a considerable distance. Of the two methods of boring it, at the end or at one side, it is the latter that is in use in the whole of the New Hebrides and in the Banks and Torres Islands, except in the island of Fate, where it is bored at the end. It is therefore only with trumpets with the hole bored at the side, which is also the commonest form in Polynesia, that we are concerned here. The trumpet is held in the left hand, with the hole pressed against the mouth, and variations in tone are produced by inserting the fingers of the right hand into the opening at the end of the shell. As the fingers are inserted further into the hole the tone rises, so that by this means a variety of tones is obtained. The variations in tone, combined with the number of times they are repeated, form the
[202] basis on which a number of established signals have been evolved, chief among which, in the Small Islands, are the four signals blown to herald the exchange or sacrifice of the four main categories of tusked boars.[4]

There is thus an intimate connexion between conch-shell trumpets

[1] Presumably his other wives.

[2] The sow littering at Tolamp is symbolical of the fact that the wife was fertilised by a Tolamp man. This part of the tale seems to imply that if Burial was not himself fertile, his boars could not be either.

[3] Inferior trumpets are made also of Kassis shell. These are particularly noticeable in Oba (Speiser, 3, p. 422).

[4] See p. 243.

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and the sacrifice of tusked boars, and this holds true throughout the whole of the area under consideration. The close connexion with the public graded institution is seen also by the fact that in the Banks Islands, where entrance to the Sukwe is paid for with shell-money, conch-shell signals are blown for the shell-money as well as for pigs.[1] The blowing of conch-shell signals is important also in connexion with mortuary rites. In the North and North-Central New Hebrides, they are blown during the sacrifice of the tusked boars with which the dead man placates the Guardian Ghost. In other parts, such as in the Banks Islands, conch-shell trumpets are blown during mortuary rites on the fifth day after death "to drive away ghosts," [2] apparently without specific reference to pigs. In Matanavat, in North Malekula, they are blown after a man has struck the forehead of the hanging body of a man killed in warfare to "make this place clean again." [3] This is an instance of human sacrifice which has been replaced in everyday ritual by the sacrifice of pigs. Conch-shell trumpets are thus primarily connected with ideas connected with death and with sacrifice, primarily of human beings, and secondarily, though much more commonly, of pigs.

(b) *Connected with Tagaro and inimicable to the Guardian Ghost.*

Yet another aspect of the blowing of conch-shell trumpets is their connexion with sky-deities of the Kwat-Ambat-Tagaro cycle. This also is not unconnected with pigs, since it is this deity who, in several places, is accredited with having introduced tusked boars,[4] which then, in their capacity as sacrificial animals, become associated with the Guardian Ghost. This leads us back to questions of mythology. We have already seen how the blowing of conch-shell trumpets signalises the sacrifice of tusked boars, and we have seen also how in Vao these animals represent the Guardian Ghost. The conch-shell trumpet is thus the signal of victory over the Guardian Ghost. This means also that it is the signal of victory over death, whence their use in the Banks Islands to drive away the ghost of a dead man on the fifth day after death, that is to say, the day on which the dead man, through the sacrifice of tusked boars, becomes immortal.[5] This is why, also, in the Oba story quoted above,[6] the brothers of the Guardian Ghost, there called Mera-mbuto, are slain by the sound of the conch-shell trumpet blown by Tagaro, and Mera-mbuto himself is killed by jumping about in his cave and dashing his head accidentally against a rock, which pierces it, just as tusked boars are slain by being struck on the head. In this same tale, Tagaro tricked Mera-mbuto by telling him

[1] Rivers, 1, vol. I, pp. 67, 76.
[2] Codrington, 3, pp. 266-7.
[3] Harrisson, 2, p. 54.
[4] For examples of legends told in Atchin how Ta-har gave tusked boars to man, see future volumes.
[5] See p. 544.
[6] See p. 534.

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534 that the trumpet was "the voice of you and me," but it turned out to be the voice of Tagaro alone, through which Mera-mbuto the earth-bound was destroyed.

(c) *The power of the voice.*

An extension of this power of the voice is seen in Codrington's account, from the Banks Islands, of how a great man about to make a feast would perform a charm over certain leaves; he would then "chew and puff all night to get *mana*; in the morning he would blow his shell trumpet to spread abroad the influence of his leaves, which would . . . draw a multitude to the feast." [1] For the same reason, coupled with their use in connexion with pigs, conch-shell trumpets are particularly associated with chiefs and men of high rank throughout the group. They are also associated with trading expeditions in long-distance canoes, the return of which is invariably heralded by the sound of conch-shell signals resounding over the water to announce the number and value of tusked boars that have been acquired. So also, before any rite at which tusked boars are to be presented, the approaching party from another village halts in the bush on the outskirts of the dancing-ground, and the sound of the trumpets moaning through the trees falls as sweet music on the ears of those awaiting them. In the Small Islands conch-shell trumpets are usually blown singly or in pairs. Deacon, however, records nine conch-shell trumpets blown together before a mass sacrifice of pigs at Lambumbu in North Malekula, where there appear to be hereditary chiefs.[2]

BRIEF COMPARATIVE SURVEY

171 Comparative studies outside the Northern New Hebrides are outside the scope of this book, but the artificial elongation of pigs' tusks in this area is one of such peculiar importance that I feel justified in summarising here briefly the results of Speiser's enquiry into its distribution and into some of the motives that underlie it.[3]

Speiser points out in the first place that, despite the universal distribution of the pig in all other parts of Melanesia, this animal was, before the coming of the white man, unknown in New Caledonia. This indicates that the pig was not brought by the earliest migrants from Indonesia.

Though pigs form an integral part of native culture throughout the rest of Melanesia, there is, however, only one area in which their tusks

[1] Codrington, 3, p. 111.

[2] Deacon, 4, p. 368. On this page also Deacon reproduces the chords played. My own detailed records of conch-shell signals blown on Atchin will appear in a future volume. Speiser (3, p. 422) says that at a death feast on Vao conch-shell trumpets are blown through a bamboo tube inserted into the hole. I am myself not aware of this practice.

[3] Speiser, 5, pp. 441-4; and 6, pp. 145 and 157-64.

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CHAPTER XII

THE MAKI: GONGS, SONGS, DANCES

SLIT GONGS

Two kinds: horizontal and upright.

INTIMATELY connected with the whole Maki rite are the upright slit gongs.

There are two types of slit gong in the New Hebrides:

(*a*) A length of bamboo or wood hollowed out by means of a longitudinal slit, which is laid horizontally on the ground and sounded by being beaten with a stick on one edge of the slit. This type is found widely distributed in Polynesia and Southern Melanesia, and in the matrilineal region of the Solomons.[1] So far as the New Hebrides are concerned, this is the only type of slit gong found throughout the group except in the cultural area centering round Malekula, where the upright slit gong predominates. Even in these islands, however, small horizontal slit gongs are combined in orchestras with the upright gongs. These horizontal slit gongs are usually plain, though in South Malekula they may occasionally be found carved with a face at one end, apparently in imitation of the upright gongs.

(*b*) Upright slit gongs made out of the trunks of forest trees, in which a vertical slit is made, through which the trunk is hollowed out by means of shell adzes, leaving a thickness of two or three inches of wood all round. The cylinder so formed is left closed at both ends, the lower end being buried in the ground and the upper end carved to represent a human face. The gong is thus at the same time a statue, and the sound produced by striking one edge of the slit is said in some districts (though I was not told this on Vao) to represent the voice of the ancestral ghosts. These magnificent instruments, sometimes as much as ten feet high, have, compared with the horizontal slit gongs, a very restricted area of distribution. They are found only in Malekula, Ambrim, Epi and Fate. Thus, if we except Fate (about which we have no information as to the presence or absence of a graded society), their distribution is seen to coincide exactly with that of the Maki and of the monolith as the most characteristic monument erected for the higher ranks.[2]

[1] Rivers, 1, vol. II, pp. 459-60. Rivers points out that they are absent from the Western Solomons, where the influence of the betel people have ousted many features of the culture of the kava people to whom he attributes the introduction of these instruments.

[2] See Chapter XXVI, pp. 697, 712, 717.

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PLATE XIII, 1 and 2

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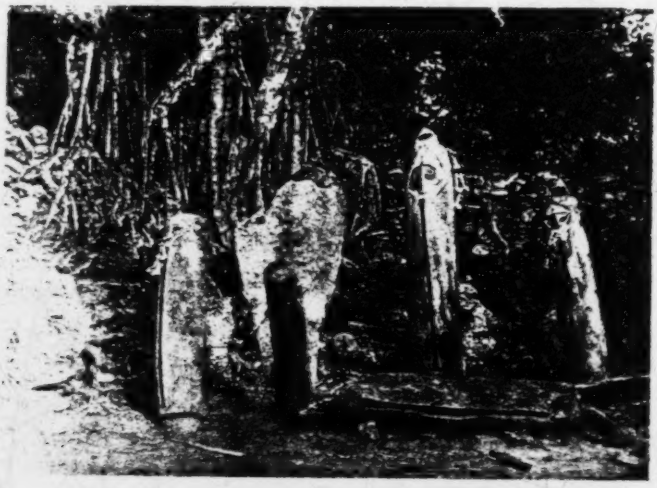

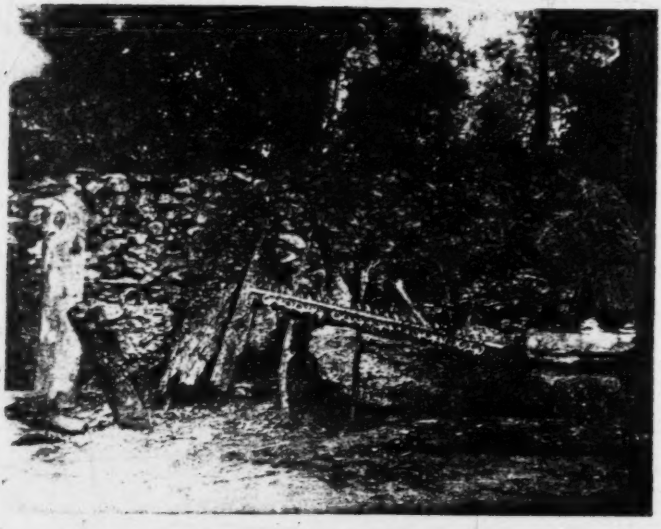

1. Main portion of the gong-orchestra at Pete-hul including mother-gong. Behind, a large monolith and part of the stone-platform. (*See Frontispiece and Plate* II, 2)

2. Continuation of the above to the right. Old gongs, dolmens and rack displaying the tusked jaws of sacrificed boars

[facing p. 310]

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vanu velal, "they welcome the villages (that come to dance) *Velal*." The first party to dance, namely the introducing "line" of the home-village, is said to *vel dromghe*, "dance first." The process of dancing in rotation is called *havean*, and the last and final performance, when the introducing "line" again dance and are joined this time by parties from all villages at once in what is usually an all-night dance, is called *havean e him*, "the turn of the home-village (*him*)."

Dances fall into three groups.

The dances themselves may be divided for purposes of description into three groups:

(1) Processional dances, danced from one end of the dancing-ground to the other, or, on occasion, along the roads leading to the dancing-ground, or even, in matters connected with the sea, on the beach.

(2) Circular dances, danced radially round a central post. These are performed only on the dancing-ground.

(3) Figure-dances called *na-leng*.

Processional and circular dances associated with two types of dancing-ground.

The figure-dances fall into a distinct category by themselves, and I will deal with them later. The other two groups, the processional and the circular, are probably to a large extent conditioned by the types of dancing-ground on which they were originally danced. This fact will probably assist us to some extent in disentangling the various elements that go to build up the ritual of the Maki, by showing their connexion with different areas in which the graded society is found. For there are, in fact, two types of dancing-ground in Malekula. These are:

(*a*) A long narrow type, such as is found in Vao, Atchin and Wala. There is some reason for supposing that this type of dancing-ground was simply developed out of the widening of the men's path as it leads through the village. In this type the gongs are placed at one side, namely the Upper or men's Side, where they occupy somewhat incongruously a middle position among the stones and images set up for the Maki.

(*b*) A circular type, with the gongs in the centre. This type of dancing-ground is that found all over the south and centre of Malekula as far north as Lagalag (we have no information regarding the Big Nambas) and in the Small Islands as far north as Uripiv.

Upright slit gongs originally associated with circular dancing-grounds.

Taking into consideration the fact that the upright slit gongs are much more realistically carved in the south, where the gong-rhythms are also more highly developed, and their position of honour in the centre

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of the dancing-ground, it is probable that it is with this type of circular dancing-ground that they were originally associated. Thus the Small Islands appear to have derived the upright slit gong from Malekula, but this influence was not strong enough to alter the whole shape of the dancing-ground, which retains the long narrow form presumably associated with the pre-Maki form of public graded society in which the large dolmen was the only monument erected.

Thus the gongs come to occupy the somewhat anomalous position they now hold in the middle of the Upper Side. This leaves the floor of the dancing-ground without a central point round which the introduced circular dances can be performed. This lack is made good in Atchin by the provision of sacrificial posts erected permanently in the middle of the ground and serving, in the rites leading up to the main Maki sacrifice, to support huge banners representing hawks. In Vao such posts, used for the same purpose, are also erected at the same period in the ritual cycle, but are not left permanently there. When erected, they serve as a focus for the circular dances, and on certain other occasions an erythrina tree (*na-rar*) planted in the centre of the dancing-ground fulfils the same function.[1]

PROCESSIONAL DANCES

The distinction drawn above between processional and circular dances and their primary association with different types of dancing-ground applies chiefly to those connected with the Maki. These are all danced out of doors, in the dancing-ground or along the paths leading to it, or on the beach. There is, however, another type of more intimate processional dance performed within a more confined space, as, for instance, those danced during the mortuary rites backwards and forwards in front of the Lodge, or, in the case of initiation, within the Initiation House itself. Some of these, again, may be performed sometimes in the dancing-ground and sometimes indoors. It is thus not easy to draw a clear line of demarcation between the two. The essence of them all, however, is that they progress from one spot to another, even though the same ground may be covered over and over again, and for this reason I propose to class them all under the heading of Processional (as opposed to Circular) Dances.

Na-rel

The most important, and at the same time the simplest, processional dance is that called *Na-rel*, derived from a root meaning "to walk," variations of which, such as *rel*, *ral*, *rali*, mean "walk about," "run," "run about," etc. In this case it is used to indicate a heavy thudding step, each foot lifted from the ground before the other is brought down

[1] See p. 420.

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535 Deacon gives a fuller account of a performance of *teur* that he witnessed at Lambumbu,[1] which contains many of the same elements as the Small Islands version. He also describes the performance of a dance called by this name during the rites for the erection of a new gong-orchestra in Lagalag,[2] by which it would appear that in this neighbourhood all circular dances, whatever their probable variation in detail, are known by this name.

Another short but vivid impression, this time from Matanavat on the north coast, evidently referring to the same dance, has been recorded by Harrisson, whom it equally impressed.[3]

NA-LENG: FIGURE-DANCES AND MUMMING PLAYS

536 535 On an entirely different plane from any of the processional or circular dances described above are the figure-dances called *na-leng*.

While the former stir the deepest emotions, and for this very reason the average European, though vaguely aware of the tremendous forces that are at work in them, and moved beyond words by the intense, almost ecstatic feelings they arouse, cannot hope ever really to understand them, the figure-dances express a much more conscious side of the natives' creative power, and are thus more easy for the white man to appreciate in their full formal beauty. They are, in fact, the supreme expression of the natives' conscious artistic sense, which is of a very high order.

They represent in miniature all those things which the Greeks classed under the heading of Drama. For the word *na-leng* includes:

(*a*) Mumming Plays of two kinds, namely
  (i) Tragedies dealing with mythological subjects;
  (ii) Comedies which are skits on everyday life.

(*b*) Formal Figure-Dances, consisting of a chorus acting in conjunction with players of individual rôles.

The main difference between these and the classical drama lies in the fact that, apart from the intermittent accompaniment of the gongs, the dramatic performances are carried through in dumb show, the imitative powers of the natives, in which they are past masters, taking the place of words.

536 534 535 Mumming plays and the figure-dances are both called *na-leng*, and both are distinguished from all other features of native culture by the fact that the actors and dancers wear ankle-rattles made of the seed-cases

[1] Deacon, 4, p. 363.
[2] Ibid., 4, pp. 513 ff., including a plan of the dancing-ground and the position of the dancers on p. 515.
[3] Harrisson, 2, p. 31.

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of the *pangium edule* strung together on bands of soft plaited string. The note of these is softer than that of the Morris bells of England, since the comparative shrillness of the metal is absent, and when, as sometimes happens, as many as a hundred feet strike the ground together, the sound is at once voluminous and sweet.

The performances usually occur at dawn on the day of an important rite after the close of the preceding all-night dance. The occasions of which I have record on Vao are the morning of the day on which a new set of gongs is put up, and the morning of the Thirtieth Day after the main sacrifice both of Low and High Maki.[1]

They are probably performed on other occasions as well, for each *na-leng* has a special name, and a women's dance called *rokaik*,[2] connected with the killing of home-bred circle-tuskers and performed on the day of the chief sacrifice at High Maki, was said to be the same as the Atchin *na-leng wishewin*, or women's "*na-leng*."

Godefroy also records that "during the interminable Maki rites they perform a dance which takes them to *bakeran*," which means the sky, or "heaven" as he terms it.[3] This may be another *na-leng*, or may refer to one of the major Maki dances such as *Taure*.

On each occasion proceedings open with the performance of a series of mumming plays. These are performed in rotation by the members of the visiting villages, both from Vao and from the mainland and other Small Islands, who have already been taking part in the all-night dance. These may be either tragedies, that is to say plays based on mythological subjects though treated as a rule in a burlesque way, or else pantomimes representing everyday matters such as fishing or feeding fowls, or skits on recent events. The mythological origin of these mumming plays is shown by the fact that, in addition to the wearing of ankle-rattles, each actor either wears a mask (sure sign that he is a ghost), or else has his face covered by a veil consisting of strips of the white inner bark of certain trees tied on to a bamboo frame that rests on the head, on to the top of which is fastened a modelled or carved image of the man, fish, bird, or even inanimate object such as a boat, that he may for the time being represent. Thus clothed and disguised, the actors play their parts, always observing one rule, that they never remain still, but when supposed to be standing they must nevertheless dance, and when moving from one place to another must never walk or run, but must proceed with swift shuffling steps that cause their ankle-rattles to maintain a ceaseless musical clatter.

After the mumming plays are over, it is the turn of the home-people to perform a figure-dance. In this the main body of dancers is formed by the Maki-men themselves. They form, however, only the chorus. The parts of the individual star-dancers are taken by men of the introducing "line," the Maki-men's "fathers" or "sons."

[1] See p. 402. [2] See Song 3, p. 385. [3] See p. 214.

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PLATE XIV

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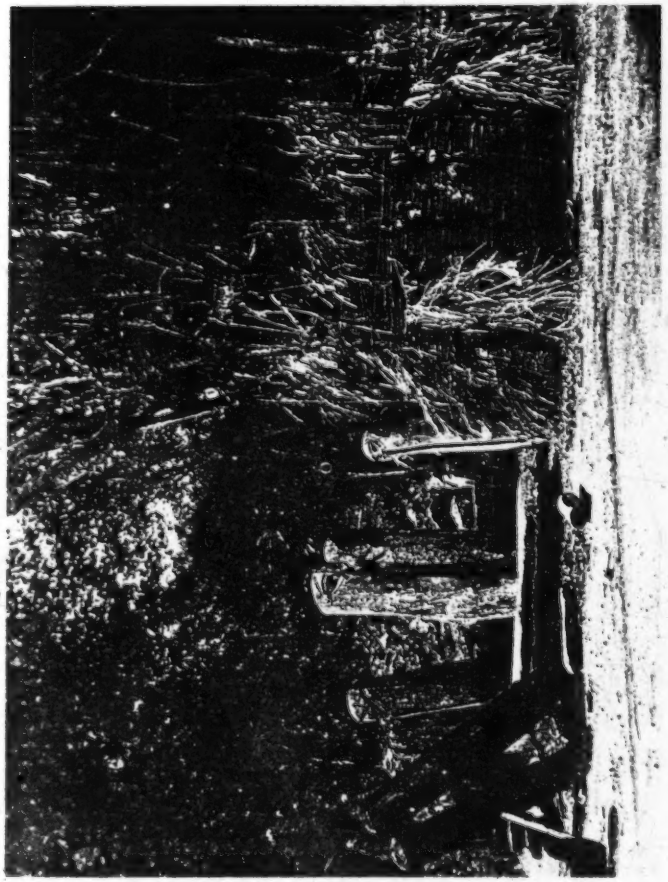

Gong-orchestra at Togh-vanu. Note the old prostrate gong on which the leader of the orchestra sits while playing the mother-gong. In front lie two portable gongets. The screen on the right encloses the most recently erected dolmen

[facing p. 34]

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Maki-men that is performing the rite, and more particularly of the chief sacrificers of this "line" whose boars will be slain on the stone-platform. In accordance with the general principles governing the Maki, the members of this "line" will not themselves do any of the work connected with the making, transport or erection of the gongs. This work will be accomplished by the members of the introducing "line" in the home-villages, assisted at times by members of the other Vao villages, the part played by the Maki-men being confined to providing all the pigs and other food for the accompanying feasts, and dancing and singing songs from the appropriate song-and-dance cycles for the encouragement and pleasure of the workers, and for their own honour and glory.

Composition of gong-orchestra on Vao. Names of the gongs.

Before giving an account of the rites it is necessary to add to the general description given on pp. 311-12 a more detailed description of them as they are arranged and constructed on Vao. The general word for gong on this island is *na-mbe*, and the gong-orchestra consists of—

(*a*) *Upright gongs*, with human face carved above the slit and beaten with a single stick:
- (i) The mother-gong, called *tinan*, meaning simply "mother." This is the largest.
- (ii) A slightly smaller upright gong, called *tarine*.
- (iii) Another slightly smaller one called *gheluvghe*.
- (iv) If a sufficient number of men are available to work and pigs to be killed, a fourth kind of upright gong is set up, called *pētūr*. It is considered to be of the same calibre as the *tarine*. [This may be an innovation from Atchin, as one of the Atchin upright gongs is called *puetur*.]

(*b*) *Horizontal gongs*, uncarved, and beaten with two sticks:
- (i) A large horizontal gong called *ru-rurghen*.
- (ii) A number of small portable horizontal gonglets called *sarune*.

In all cases, the sticks for beating the gongs are called *masan*.

Construction of upright slit gong.

Each upright gong is made out of the trunk of a large forest tree, usually of the kind called *mes-mes*.[1] Each of the larger gongs has on its upper end a pierced projection, called *pilön*, meaning "bald," through which a rope is passed when it is dragged to the shore of the mainland, where it has been felled, and later from the Vao beach to the dancing-ground where it is to be set up. On the lower end is an undercut projection, called *laghen*, which, when the gong is set up, is inserted into the ground. The gong is hollowed out by experts (see p. 355), by means of

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 38, says that gongs may also be made of trees which he calls "tamanou," "faux-teck" (false teak) and "cohu," called by the natives *na-ter(a)*.

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shell adzes [1] through a narrow slit called *piriov* [2] running longitudinally down the face of the gong and equal in length to the circumference of the gong. Either right or left lip of this slit is thick, and the other thin, and it is on the thin edge that the gong is struck. Hence the thick edge is called *vivi mbut*, the "dumb" lip, and the thin one is called *vivi tang*, the "crying" lip. The solid part between the top of the slit and the top of the gong is called *pet vatu*, "head of the stone," and it is on this that the human face (*n'aghon*) representing the ancestors is carved.

I will make no attempt to describe the carving of the face, which can

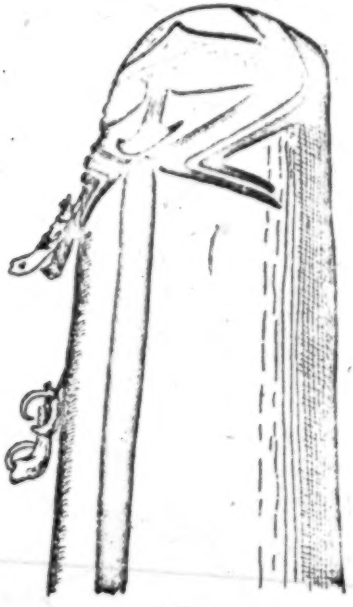

FIG. 47

Upper part of a gong in the dancing-ground of Venu on the Inferior Side of Vao. Note the very different style of carving from that of the mother-gong at Pete-hul. Jaws of two tusked boars sacrificed at its consecration are attached to the gong by strings.

be examined in the accompanying illustration. The nose is in all cases long and narrow, and the cheek-bones clearly defined. It is worth noticing the eyes, which have a curiously Mongolian or Micronesian look, except in one case, that of the mother-gong at Pete-hul, where, as in the case of

[1] Nowadays iron tools are used.

[2] This word is primarily applied to the creeper by means of which the expert magician measures its length before it is cut (see p. 354).

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the wooden images, they are round. In all cases the place of the mouth is occupied by the top of the slit, since it is by means of this slit that the sound representing the voice of the ancestors is made. The nostrils and eyes are pierced, and it is to the holes so made, as well as to the pierced projection usually left on the top of the gong, that the jaws of the boars sacrificed in honour of the gongs are hung.

THE RITES

Rites connected with the Felling and Transportation of the Log

Since no trees of sufficient size grow on the island, these must be sought on the mainland, and the future owners' first act is to select the trees and to agree on a suitable price with the owners of the land.

Once this has been done, proceedings are in the hands only of the Maki-men and of their introducing "line."

Weeding the dancing-ground.

The first thing to be done, as for all major rites, is the weeding and general tidying up of the dancing-ground. This, like all such work, is done by the members of the introducing "line." Unless the dancing-ground has got badly out of hand the work is not heavy, and is done largely by the older men, not excluding the "maker of the Maki" himself, whose particular pride it is that this half-sacred ground, where he himself spends so much of his time sitting about, should be in good order. The fact that this initial work is about to take place is announced to all the villages on the island by messengers, who take with them gifts of what I have called "message-yams," single yams of fine quality to each of which a croton leaf has been tied as indication of their ambassadorial nature.[1] These are duly delivered in the dancing-ground of each village in the prescribed order, beginning with that furthest away from the home-village.

In addition to this, the members of each village are presented with a pig, and also a fowl which is a sign of peace. These are to be killed and eaten, and the resulting feast is of the kind called *masean*, which (in contrast to *tămean*, which is a feast given in return for work done) is a pure gift, demanding no labour and no return.[2]

[1] For a general account of this and of all ritual distributions of yams see pp. 301 ff.

[2] This *masean* feast is in the nature of an opening ceremony, the purpose of which is to usher in the whole series of rites. Most other feasts are of the type called *tamean*. Just as the word *masean* is used for a feast for which no return is expected, so the word *ma-masean* (Atchin *matsing*) is used for work which a man does for his own sake, such as gardening and so on, as opposed to what Godefroy refers to as "forced labour" done for others (Godefroy, 1934, p. 210; see p. 535). Compare also Mota *mategae*, "a gift" (Codrington, 2, and Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 66).

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PLATE XV

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Part of Togh-vanu dancing-ground before weeding. On the extreme left is one of the gongs seen in Plate XIV

[facing p. 363]

3: Harrisson N-5 (1934-1935) 1936
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but there is a big range of inter-tribal difference; take several islands and the variety is great. Curved houses seem to be found only in south Malekula, Ureparapara of the Banks (*cf.* Speiser, 1913, Pl. 15), and the southern islands of the group, an extraordinary distribution. To understand the development and organization of the village only structurally, a full study of each particular unit is necessary.

Speiser (1913) has said something of the distribution of stone works. Stone pudding-basins are confined to Big Bay. I was interested in stone axes, of which I made a considerable collection. Remarkable stone basins, "witching-vats," are confined to Gaua, where Mrs. Baker and I also found a stone effigy (Baker, 1935). In one small area of south-west Santo, around the village of Tavua, the stone axes are entirely distinct from all others in the group, being very slender and long in relation to their breadth. Shell axes do not occur in Santo, but are common in Malekula; in the Big Nambas there are some ritual clubs that seem to be made out of fossilized squid's cuttles, very long and heavy.

War-clubs are curved only in north-east Santo; long stick clubs are confined to the northern islands; paddle clubs characteristic of Malekula are absent on Santo. The Santo and Malo bows are regularly arched; in south and east Malekula the concavity is uneven, greater in the lower half. Feathered spear shafts are apparently confined to north Malekula and islets; fearful spear-tips of serried human bones only in Santo. Feather-shafted arrows I have not seen in Santo, but Speiser reports them from Big Bay, and there are two without locality in the Cambridge Ethnological Museum; in certain *na-leng* dances of north Malekula, feathered arrows are used. Combs worn in the hair show wide pattern range; a triangular form I have only seen on Gaua, and ones with handles decorated by pigs' bristles are confined to Sakau, Santo.

The distribution of *kava* is curious. It has a very local usage in north Malekula, where it is chewed and spat into a trough; is not used in south Malekula; in Sakau, Santo, the stalk is chewed; elsewhere in Santo the root is chewed and spat out into coconut shells (only by chiefs in part of the north-west), except around Turi, where it is absent. In the eastern islands *kava* is generally used green, crushed with a stone pounder. On Malo it is seldom used unless in magical rites.

There is a fair uniformity in the type of mixed bisexual dances connected with the graded society; the musical instruments vary more. Pan-pipes are the most important in north-west Santo; though widespread, these are seldom used for dances elsewhere; they are semi-sacred in central Malekula; into Sakau and Malekula the pan-pipes have been recently introduced. On Malo and in east Santo bamboos beaten on the ground are the main dance accompaniment; the former type is close to a large flute figured by Speiser (1913, Pl. 108). The nose-flute is used in Sakau; musical bow in central-south Malekula. Slit gongs are always upright in the patrilineal central islands, reclined in the northern islands. Sticks tapped together have developed into a dance band in the Big Nambas. Bone knives are common in south Malekula, but nowhere else have I found one; wooden knives are absent in Malekula, crude in Malo and W. Santo, elaborate in the Banks Islands.